



**Independent Joint Anti-Corruption
Monitoring & Evaluation Committee**

NEWS RELEASE: UNEVEN RESULTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

KABUL, Afghanistan, September 17, 2015 – After almost one year in power, the time is ripe for assessing the National Unity Government’s battle against corruption. And while some progress has undoubtedly been made, such as the sacking of various corrupt officials and the ongoing reform of the procurement regime, much work remains to be done if Afghanistan is to evolve into a corruption-free country capable of attracting foreign investment and providing a prosperous future for its citizens.

One essential pre-condition to achieving these objectives is the creation and sustainment of a reliable and transparent rule-of-law system capable of securing the rights of the individual and punishing the wrongs committed by malign actors. Unfortunately, notwithstanding billions in foreign investment, the justice sector remains largely incapable of investigating and prosecuting corruption cases, especially against well-connected individuals who operate with near impunity, secure in the knowledge that they are effectively above the law. As MEC’s April 2015 corruption-case tracking report points out, one reason for this is that various actors within the judicial system often fail to cooperate with one another, preventing the effective investigation of alleged crimes and resulting in cases sometimes getting lost as they are transferred from agency to agency. Furthermore, almost twelve months to the day after the President and Chief Executive Officer were sworn in, they remain unsuccessful in selecting a suitable candidate for the crucial position of Attorney General. Until this post is filled, the fight against corruption will remain severely handicapped.

Despite these challenges, the Afghan government has made notable—if incremental and uneven—progress in combatting corruption. As a MEC report released today demonstrates, the recent 100-Day Plans produced by government agencies provide evidence that some Afghan ministries are beginning to integrate anti-corruption measures into their standard operating procedures. But these documents, too, are flawed, often lacking details and sometimes setting unrealistic short-term objectives. Today, MEC is also releasing its Eighth Sixth-Month Report, assessing the level of compliance with all 380 recommendations we have made since we began operations in 2011. To monitor these recommendations, MEC staffers canvassed more than 30 institutions this summer to determine whether these organizations had enacted MEC’s recommendations. We found:

- Recommendations not implemented at all: 76 (20%)
- Recommendations partially implemented: 176 (46%)
- Recommendations completely implemented: 128 (34%)

As these results make clear, there is still significant room for improvement in the government’s performance. However, the number of fully implemented recommendations did rise since MEC’s previous review in April 2015, when just 50 out of 369 (13.6%) recommendations were categorized as fully implemented, providing at least some evidence that the government and international community remain committed to implementing MEC’s recommendations, as articulated in the recent Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework. The next twelve months, however, will clarify whether this modest progress is merely ephemeral, or the first step on the road to an Afghanistan where corruption is the exception and not the rule.

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